

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: US-USSR ENERGY AGREEMENT: GAS (08.05): USDEL
VISIT AND PROGRAM OF COOPERATION

REF: (A) STATE 122003, (B) STATE 105262

1. IN 12 MAY MEETING AT MINGAZPROM, BITKOV EXPLAINED THAT SOVIETS ARE NOW PREPARING DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR PROGRAMS OF FUTURE BILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE TWO AGREED THEMES, ENHANCED GAS RECOVERY AND OPERATIONS UNDER CONDITIONS OF EXTREME COLD. BITKOV EXPLAINED THAT THESE DRAFTS WILL BE READY BY THE END OF MAY OR DURING FIRST TEN DAYS OF JUNE. MINGAZPROM WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE THESE DRAFTS TO THE U.S. BEFORE THE VISIT, AND BITKOV EXPRESSED HOPE THAT USDEL COULD DO THE SAME. BITKOV SUGGESTED THAT USDEL VISIT TIMING BE SENT WHEN DRAFT OUTLINE IS PROVIDED, WITH VISIT OCCURRING IN JULY OR AUGUST. ASKED WHETHER JUNE TIMING WAS STILL POSSIBLE FOR USDEL VISIT, BITKOV SAID THAT NOT ENOUGH TIME REMAINS FOR ARRANGING FULL PROGRAM. (AFTER UNCLASSIFIED

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MEETING, GUL'YAYEV, ALSO PRESENT, EXPLAINED THAT SOVIET OUTLINE WILL BE 2-3 PAGES IN LENGTH, AND IDEA IS THAT SOVIET - US CHAIRMEN SHOULD HAVE PROPOSALS BEFORE THEM IN ESTABLISHING BETTER PROGRAM.)

2. ON POSSIBLE NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION, BITKOV REPEATED THAT SOVIETS VERY MUCH WANT TWO ALREADY-AGREED AREAS

WORKING PRODUCTIVELY BEFORE DIVERTING ATTENTION TO NEW AREAS. HE RECALLED THAT SOVIETS SUGGESTED "SEVERAL YEARS AGO" A LIST OF SEVEN POSSIBLE AREAS, BUT THAT ONLY TWO HAD BEEN AGREED. HE SURMISED THAT SOVIETS COULD "POSSIBLY GO BACK THROUGH THE REMAINING FIVE TO SEE IF ANYTHING IS WORTHWHILE," BUT REPEATED DESIRE TO ESTABLISH PROGRAMS IN THE TWO AGREED AREAS FIRST. BITKOV DIGRESSED, VISIBLY UNCOMFORTABLY, TO THE QUESTION OF OFF-IEJ THAT "IN PRINCMVLE" IT COULD BE A NEW AREA OF COOPERATION, BUT US MUST REALIZE THAT SOVIET OFFSHORE DRILLING OPERATIONS ARE JUST STARTING AND ARE STILL VERY SMALL. BITKOV DUCKED QUESTION OF WHETHER OFF-SHORE CASPIAN OPERATIONS COULD BE INCLUDED IN THIS VISIT'S ITINERARY.

3. EMBOFF HAD PREPARED U.S. PROPOSAL FOR NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION (REF B, PARA 2) AS NON-PAPER, BUT SINCE BITKOV WAS UNPREPARED TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE NEW AREAS, EMBOFF DID NOT RPT NOT PROVIDE IT TO SOVIETS.

4. COMMENT. BITKOV MAY HAVE WANTED TO LIMIT DISCUSSION TO AGREED AREAS AND AVOID NEW AREAS FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST, MINGAZPROM IS PROBABLY UNDER SOME PRESSURE TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING WITH THE GAS COOPERATION, AND BELIEVES THAT BEST WAY IS TO PROCEED WITH TWO AGREED TOPICS, INSTEAD OF DIFFUSING EFFORTS AMONG SEVERAL MORE. FURTHERMORE, MINGAZPROM HAS APPARENTLY GAINED IMPRESSION (REF B UNCLASSIFIED

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APPARENTLY INDICATES IT IS A MISTAKEN ONE) THAT USDEL'S REQUESTS TO SEE OFFSHORE OPERATIONS PRESAGE A U.S. PROPOSAL FOR CYW ON IN OFF-SHORE OPERATIONS. WHILE THE MINISTRY OF GAS INDUSTRY MIGHT BE ABLE TO ARRANGE A ONE-TIME VISIT TO OFFSHORE OPERATIONS (EVEN THAT IS PROBLEMATIC), THE MINISTRY ALSO KNOWS THAT ANY RESULTANT OFFSHORE COOPERATION WOULD FALL OUTSIDE ITS PURVIEW AND IS THEREFORE OUTSIDE ITS DIRECT INTEREST. ALTHOUGH REF A RECEIVED AFTER MEETING TOOK PLACE, EMBOFF HAD, AS NOTED, ASCERTAINED THAT SOVIETS WILL BE PREPARED FOR USDEL ONLY IN JULY OR AUGUST, AND CANNOT RECEIVE THEM IN JUNE. TOON

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